

# VETS QUARTERLY

- ❖ ORGANIZATIONAL SPOTLIGHT-  
NATIONS FINEST
- ❖ PACT ACT- HAVE YOU FILED YET?
- ❖ APPOINTMENTS & NEW OUTREACH  
VEHICLE
- ❖ RABA NEW BUS ROUTE
- ❖ CALVET TUITION FEE WAIVER INFO
- ❖ TOWN HALL CANCELATION -EVENING  
MEETING IN OCTOBER
- ❖ FEEL FREE TO SUBMIT QUESTIONS!



VSO Quarterly Newsletter

Volume No. 19, July, August, September 2023

# Veterans Services Community Care Partner

PROVIDING SERVICES TO VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES FOR  
NEARLY 50 YEARS

## NATIONS FINEST

With more than 31 locations in 14 mostly rural communities in California, Arizona, and Nevada, each year they provide critical services and support for over 7,000 veterans and their families. Their facilities are staffed by a diverse, professional, and talented group of individuals who are committed to serving all veterans in a respectful and positive way.

While they tailor their approach to the individual needs of each veteran, their services generally fall under a few broad categories.

- Transitional Housing
- Case Management
- Mental Health
- Employment Services
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Mobile Units
- Homelessness Prevention
- Behavioral Health

### Nation's Finest - Redding

[www.nationsfinest.org](http://www.nationsfinest.org)

153 Hartnell Ave Ste 100,

Redding, CA 96002

(530) 223-3211

“At Nation’s Finest, our mission is to support America’s military veterans and their families with a comprehensive approach to housing, health, and employment that helps them achieve self-sufficiency and reach their full potential.”

1-833-GOT-YOR6

1-833-468-9676



**NATION'S  
FINEST**

**\*Organizational**

**Spotlight\***

# Have you filed your PACT Act Claim?

## Why Not?

VA Undersecretary for Benefits said that more than 560,000 disability compensation claims have been filed since last year under the PACT Act, the landmark legislation that broadened benefits eligibility for post-9/11 veterans and former service members from other eras sickened by exposure to environmental pollution.

To handle the influx, the VA has increased its Veterans Benefits Administration workforce by 15%, hiring thousands of workers to facilitate and process claims.

The department currently has a load of 818,000 disability claims. In fiscal 2022, it delivered a record 1.7 million decisions, up 12% from the previous year, and this year to date has rendered 15% more decisions than at the same time last year.

As of May 12, the VA had decided roughly 252,000 of the 546,000 PACT Act claims filed by veterans, with nearly 80% of decisions resulting in an approval for one or more conditions.

The department is encouraging veterans who believe they may have a condition related to overseas exposure to burn pits, Agent Orange, radiation or other substances noted in the PACT Act to *file a claim by Aug. 9, 2023, so their disability compensation can be backdated to Aug. 10, 2022, when the legislation was signed.*

They may file a claim after Aug. 9, 2023, but compensation, if approved, will be dated to their date of filing after Aug. 9, 2023.

**Come in to see your representative and get started!**



**TROY PAYNE**

**Starting July 2023**

**Monday & Tuesdays - VA Clinic**

**1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday – Burney HHSA**

**1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday – Anderson HHSA**

**\*Scheduled as appointments only\***

**Virtual appointments also available**

**Please call 225-5616 option 1  
to schedule an appointment**

# Beginning this July



Speak with your  
Veterans  
Representative on  
YOUR time frame



The Shasta County  
Veterans Services Office

*YOUR VSO WORKING FOR YOU  
Questions, call or email today!*

530-225-5616 Option #1  
vso@co.shasta.ca.us

July 1<sup>st</sup> 2023  
Our office will  
be offering  
appointments  
*1 day a week per  
representative  
upon request*

Virtual Office  
Appointments

&

In Person  
Appointments  
1 day a week



Shasta County  
Virtual  
Veterans Services  
Appointments

**Alex-Tuesday**

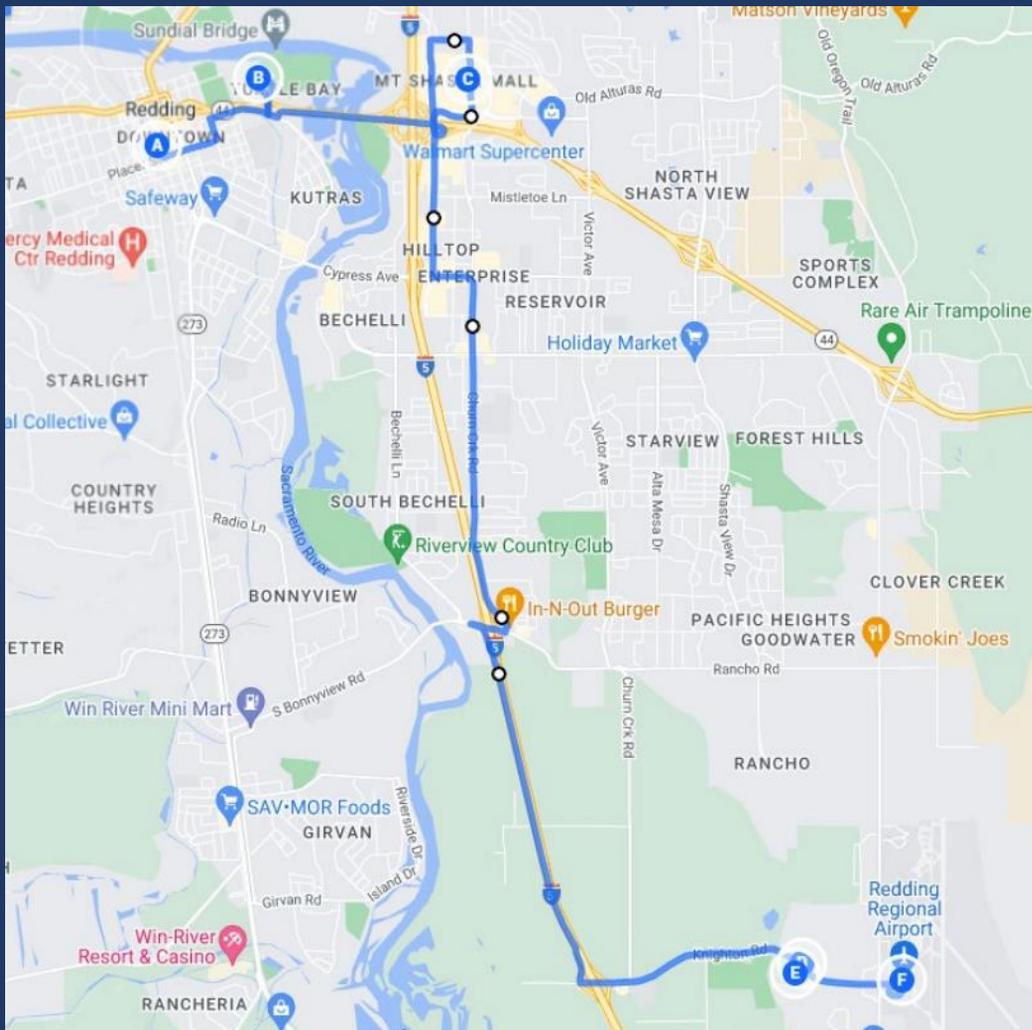
**Tori-Wednesday**

**Brian-Thursday**

# RABA Route 15

## Airport/Veterans Flex Route Service Plan

The Redding Area Bus Authority (RABA), which is a joint powers authority which includes the members from the Cities of Redding, Anderson and Shasta Lake, as well as Shasta County is proposing through its contracted transit operator, Transdev to operate a new flexible fixed route service between RABA's Downtown Passenger Terminal in Redding to the Redding Regional Airport, Monday through Saturday. Details on the service plan is presented below: Service Area/Map



Route is undergoing testing to achieve a 55-minute run time and the route alignment is subject to change.

## Proposal

RABA will begin in August of 2023, the operation of a flex route service using a cutaway bus between Downtown and Airport for a 10 hour day – Monday through Saturday. The proposed timepoints would be as follows:

- Downtown Transit Center
- Canby Transfer Center
- Churn Creek @ Save Mart
- Veterans Home
- VA Clinic
- Redding Regional Airport

The flex route would deviate up to a  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile radius of the route. Reservations are required at least the next day in advance up to 14 days in advance and the route will deviate up to two times per one way trip.

Please call (530) 241-2877 for route deviation reservations.

This route would operate for a one-year period, pending evaluation of its performance over the course of the year.

### **DEMAND RESPONSE RIDERS**

**For those that have disabilities that cannot ride traditional fixed route transit or access a fixed route bus stop, could use RABA Demand Response to the Veterans Home, VA clinic and Redding Regional Airport. The paratransit zone would be expanded to cover this area that is presently not served. An eligibility application and certification are required to use RABA Demand Response. Those not eligible for demand response would be referred to Shasta Connect if they are outside the RABA service area in accordance with coordination agreement between Shasta Regional Transportation Agency and RABA**



## College Fee Waiver

The College Fee Waiver for Veteran Dependents benefit waives mandatory system-wide tuition and fees at any State of California Community College, California State University, or University of California campus. This program does not cover the expense of books, parking or room and board. There are four plans under which dependents of Veterans may be eligible.

**QUESTION:** I did not join the military in California, can my child still apply?

**ANSWER:** Yes. If the child meets the California residency requirements. We will also need the documents to legitimize the Veterans percentage status.

**QUESTION:** Is there an age limit?

**ANSWER:** Depends on the plan and the Veterans service connection percentage. Please read each plan to find what works best for your family and what you can qualify for.

**QUESTION:** Where can I get the paperwork for the Tuition Fee Waiver?

**ANSWER:** You are welcome to go to [CALVET.ca.gov](http://CALVET.ca.gov), our website or our office!

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### **Plan A (Spouses of Veterans and Veterans at 100%)**

The unmarried child of a Veteran who is totally service-connected disabled or whose death was officially rated as service-connected is eligible. The child must be over 14 years old and under 27 years old to be eligible. If the child is a Veteran, then the age limit is extended to age 30;

The spouse of a wartime Veteran who is totally service-connected disabled is eligible. There are no age limit restrictions;

## **Plan A continued..**

The unmarried surviving spouse of a wartime Veteran whose death has been rated as service-connected is eligible. There are no age limit restrictions;

Any dependent of any Veteran who has been declared missing in action, captured in the line of duty by hostile forces, or forcibly detained or interned in the line of duty by a foreign government or power is eligible.

The Veteran must have served at least one day of active duty during a period of war as declared by the U.S. Congress, or during any time in which the Veteran was awarded a campaign or expeditionary medal. Concurrent receipt of benefits under Plan A and VA Chapter 35 benefits is prohibited. To receive benefits under Plan A, a dependent must sign an "Election To Receive College Waiver Benefits" statement acknowledging this fact. There are no income restrictions under this plan. To be eligible, the event which caused basic entitlement to benefits (i.e., the date the Veteran died of service-connected causes or the date the military or United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) rated the Veteran as totally disabled as a result of service-connected disabilities) must have occurred prior to the child's 21st birthday.

### **Plan B (Dependents of Veterans who are at least 0% Service Connected)**

The child of a Veteran who has a service-connected disability or had a service-connected disability at the time of death, or died of service-related causes is eligible.

The child's annual income, which includes the child's adjusted gross income, plus the value of support provided by a parent, may not exceed the annual income limit.

The current academic year entitlement is based upon the previous calendar year's annual income.

## Plan B continued...

Under Plan B, wartime service is not required and there are no specific age requirements. Children are the only dependents eligible under this plan. There is no prohibition against receiving concurrent VA Chapter 35 benefits.

## UPDATED FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2023-2023

TO: ALL COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS

SUBJECT: COLLEGE FEE WAIVER PROGRAM (CFW)

In accordance with the provisions of the California Education Code, Section 66025.3 (d), the new income limit for otherwise eligible students under Plan B, for the school academic year (AY) 2023-2024 is \$15,225. (Income threshold attached to this email).

Although AY 2023-2024 does not start until Summer or Fall 2023, some students apply for the waiver early in the year. Before students can apply for the CFW under Plan B, awards for AY 2023-2024 MUST accompany a SIGNED copy of the student's income tax return for calendar year 2022 OR a non-filing letter from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) or Franchise Tax Board (FTB) that verifies that a return was not filed for tax/calendar year 2022. Non-Filing letters will not be accepted until after this year's tax deadline of Tuesday, April 18, 2023. Remember that many IRS and/or FTB offices do not issue non-filing letters until after June 30<sup>th</sup>.

As you know, CalVet introduced a new process for CalVet College Fee Waivers, beginning with the 2023-24 Academic Year. This new process requires you, the CVSO, to issue a new approval letter for Plan A and B recipients that contains an approval code. Attached to this e-mail is the CalVet College Fee Waiver System – CVSO Users/VetPro Web Guide. This guide outlines the steps to create the new Plan A and Plan B Fee Waiver Letters. Please note, requirements to qualify for this benefit remain unchanged.

**Please feel free to call or visit our office if you  
or your child have any questions.**

**530-225-5616 Option #1**

**CANCELLED**

**July 10<sup>th</sup>**

**NEXT MEETING**

**October 9<sup>th</sup> @ 6PM**

# TOWN HALL MEETING

The Shasta County  
**V**eterans **S**ervices **O**ffice  
announces

**Quarterly TOWN HALL Meetings**  
to be held in the BOS Chambers as a way  
for Veterans to have their voice heard.

Please feel free to email questions or concerns to us at [vso@co.shasta.ca.us](mailto:vso@co.shasta.ca.us)

**REMINDER**  
**Next Town Hall**  
**Town Hall October 9th @6pm**



**Shasta County**  
**Veteran Services Office**  
Phone: 530-225-5616 Option #1

Visit our webpage for printable checklists.  
*Under Our Benefits- at the bottom!*

[www.shastacounty.gov/veterans](http://www.shastacounty.gov/veterans)